

REMARKS

Applicant's attorney is pleased to note that the Office Action mailed November 4, 2003 indicates that Claim 9 has been allowed. Because the Office Action failed to specify whether Claims 10 and 12, which depend directly from independent Claim 9, have been allowed, Applicant's attorney, Sanjiv M. Chokshi, initiated a telephonic interview with Examiner Edell for the purpose of determining whether such claims have, in fact, been allowed. During the interview, the Examiner acknowledged that Claims 10 and 12 have been allowed.

Referring to the Office Action, Claims 5, 26, and 27 have been rejected under 35 USC 112 as being indefinite. These rejections have been obviated by the cancellation herein of Claims 5, 26, and 27.

The Examiner rejected Claims 1, 3-6, and 26 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bliss U.S. Patent No. 3,201,172. Further, Claims 2, 11, 18, and 27 have been rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over the Bliss reference in view of Semplonius et al. U.S. Patent No. 3,669,499. Lastly, Claim 19 has been rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over the Bliss reference in view of the Semplonius et al. reference, and further in view of Lockshin U.S. Patent No. 3,188,138. These rejections have been obviated by the cancellation herein of Claims 1-6, 11, 18, 19, 26, and 27.

As a result of an earlier restriction requirement, Claims 7, 8, 13-16, and 20-25 have been withdrawn. In order to place the application in better condition for allowance, applicant's attorney has cancelled Claims 7, 8, 13-16, and 20-25.

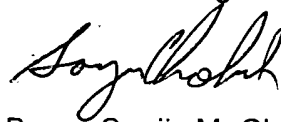
Appln. No. 09/982,689
Amdt. dated February 3, 2004
Reply to Office Action mailed November 4, 2003

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, applicant's attorney respectfully requests allowance of the present application. If such action cannot be taken, however, the Examiner is cordially invited to place a telephone call to applicant's attorney in order that any outstanding issue may be resolved without the issuance of a further office action.

No fees are believed to be due in connection with the submission of this Amendment. If there are any additional fees, including extension and petition fees, due as a result of this Amendment, the Examiner is authorized to charge them to Deposit Account No. 501402.

Respectfully Submitted,

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